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NSC BRIEFING

23 May 1960

KHRUSHCHEV AND THE USSR AFTER PARIS

- I. Khrushchev's activities since leaving Paris suggest he is undecided what course to take from here on.
 - A. In his generally moderate speech in Berlin on Friday, he seemed to be reassuring the West that he does not intend to resort to a hard "Stalinist" line toward the non-Communist world.
 1. The speech--which visibly disappointed his audience of high-level East German communists--was delayed for a day, suggesting that cooler second thoughts had prevailed after Khrushchev's intemperate performance in Paris.
 - B. On his return to Moscow the customary major speech to a "welcome-home" rally was omitted for the first time in recent years.
 1. In the meantime, Soviet propaganda has echoed the themes of his Berlin speech. While comment on the President personally, and on other members of his administration is increasingly harsh, it continues to insist that, because the American people are peaceloving, a new summit can be held in 6-8 months in "new and more propitious circumstances."
 2. Massive jamming of VOA, which was resumed on 17 May, was reduced and became more selective on 22 May.
 - C. In the military field, we have seen no indications that the reduction of forces is to be called off. Pravda says there is to be no increase in military budget.

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- II. Our general impression is that Khrushchev is attempting to prevent the situation he created in Paris from getting any worse. His 6-8 months promise on the German peace treaty--which seems to us to be more explicit than was required--may be intended to cover his rear while he deals with problems which appear to have arisen within his own party and within the bloc as a whole.
- III. The collapse of the Summit is bound to have repercussions within the Soviet Union and perhaps on Khrushchev's own position as well.
 - A. Much will depend on whether Khrushchev can continue to dominate those elements within the Communist bloc which have feared the results of East-West detente.
 - 1. Khrushchev has felt these pressures and has been obliged to make some concessions to them.
 - 2. He had already conceded at the four-power meeting on 16 May that his handling of the U-2 incident was influenced by domestic policy considerations. Possibly he was thinking more in terms of popular reaction than of powerful critics within the hierarchy.
 - 3. The Soviet people have been led to believe that their own prosperity was closely tied to a reduction of international tensions.
 - B. Despite the formidable political position which Khrushchev has built up, he may have his problem within the Kremlin.
 - 1. There is reason to believe that there was heated controversy within the Soviet hierarchy on the handling of the U-2 incident.

2. There are also good indications that Mikoyan has stubbed his political toe.
 - a. He has not appeared in Moscow since 7 May--he missed both the departure of Khrushchev for Paris and his return.
 - b. Khrushchev, during his visit to France in March-April, reportedly called him a turncoat who would do anything to save himself.
 - c. There are reports that he and Khrushchev went at it hammer and tongs over Khrushchev's harsh reaction to the U-2 incident.
 - d. Mikoyan, among K's associates, was the one who had the most knowledge of the West and believed in "deals" with the West as the best policy.
 3. Another possible omen is the increased prominence recently of Mikhail Suslov. Suslov, long considered the leading Kremlin stiff-neck, was in the forefront when Khrushchev returned to Moscow Saturday.
- C. Another meeting of the party central committee is reportedly scheduled for the near future.
1. The meeting could well tip the policy balance--toward a continuation of the Khrushchev line or in the direction of a harder line.
 2. At the moment the bulk of the evidence points toward continued Khrushchev rule, even though the events of the last two weeks have made us hedge our bets a little.

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- IV. As regards Communist China. While publicly demonstrating support for USSR's moves in Paris, Peiping is taking advantage of situation to vindicate its interpretation of American motives.
- A. Chinese say they are not at all surprised at summit breakdown because they--unlike some others, e.g., Khrushchev--view international situation correctly and are not misled by "superficial phenomena."
- B. However, Peiping fears Khrushchev will not remain firm in attitude toward US, and is likely to be angered by Khrushchev's moderate speech in Berlin.
- V. Latest move in this tangled situation is article in Soviet party journal Kommunist, violently attacking Yugoslavs in language reminiscent of what Chinese are saying about Tito.
- VI. Possible that ~~past~~ ^{present} Soviet Ambassador to US will be ~~withdrawn~~ ^{withdrawn}. Note that Menshikov's household effects seen loaded on ship in NY.

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